

Dayton Daily News Case Study – Auto Impositioning

Background

Cox Ohio Newspapers, publisher of the Dayton Daily News, began printing operations at its new Print Technology Center in 1999. The plant is anchored by an 81 couple shaftless KBA press with 18 reels and three folders, “*The most advanced newspaper plant in North America*”.



The Challenge

“We average more than 90 separate pressruns per week in our operation. Every pressrun has to be laid out to identify the reel stands and press units that will run, the color availability, formers, etc. All of this needed to be done with consideration of how complex the resulting run will be; something only a press foreman could do. We had binders full of hundreds of pressruns that we ran over the years, all laid out by hand.” Joe McKinnon, VP of Operations. Production and layout (pagination) were in constant dialogue spending hours every day to produce the desired product, last minute advertising changes caused havoc throughout the workflow and extended change over times.

The Journey

Although clearly a laborious, time consuming and expensive procedure it was a necessity, it was the only way to meet everyone’s requirements and get the paper out of the door. Steps were taken to streamline the process, but no significant gains were made.

The Discovery

“The problem with revolutionary products is getting people to know they exist” a conversation with Harland Simon at the Metro Users Group in Orlando changed this....

The Solution

The solution was Harland Simons’ auto impositioning and color advisory systems PRIMA Esprit & ColorWare. ColorWare automatically determines the pages where color can be added to a given product by entering the number of sections, pages and color requirements. ColorWare will then assess additional color possibilities, highlight preferred additional color positions, grade the production difficulty of the job and display the number of wasted color slots. Once a product is defined it is seamlessly transferred to Esprit, which automatically calculates the best imposition for the press. This is based on an algorithm that calculates the best way to produce a particular product defined by the presses capabilities and the pressmen’s preferred printing methods.



The Implementation

The first step was to configure the presses **full** (not just regularly used) capabilities into the system; reels, units, every possible lead, bar stack configuration, compensators details and former board arrangement. This was not populating a catalogue of every conceivable possibility, but instead configuring the system to understand the press capabilities and user requirements, from which it calculates the imposition.

Next was to look at some typical runs, Harland Simons engineers use these as a starting point, prior to arriving on site, to begin tailoring the system to produce runs as they would have been produced by hand.

Engineers arrived on site on December 11th and installation was complete the same day. Training the paginators and pressmen on the day to day operation of the system was a straight forward process quickly picked up by all.

The following 3 days were spent training the pressmen on the logic and reasoning behind the 'penalties' (a set of user configurable values used to inform the system of the preferred printing methods) and how to use them effectively. *"This is the single most important part of any Esprit & ColorWare project and is fundamental to the success of the system, it requires genuine commitment and 'buy-in' from all involved. This first stage will only ever get the system to perform at about 80%, the next twenty is achieved in the weeks following, as the system is used (with remote assistance from Harland Simon experts)".* Dayton committed fully to this process and had the system working at about 98% by mid January, a follow up visit in February resolved the few remaining issues.

The Results

"The PRIMA Esprit and PRIMA ColorWare system allowed us to automate the process and shift the press layout function to our pagination department who can run "what if" scenarios as they lay out the daily papers. Moving this function to the paginators allows the press foremen to focus their efforts on the quality and production out on the pressroom floor." Joe McKinnon, VP of Operations.

Hours of highly skilled work are saved every day, employees without the years of experience and skill required to manually define an imposition can do this in seconds. 'What if' scenarios can be analyzed by these same employees without having to continually consult the pressmen. Last minute advertising changes or equipment failure (reelstand, couple, unit) can be handled with ease whatever time of day or night. Mistakes have almost been eliminated, more efficient press runs have been produced and changeover times have been reduced.

"We still have the skills to operate without this system, but I certainly do not want to! Even on the rare occasion we need assistance, Harland Simon is there 24/7" Joe McKinnon, VP of Operations.

